

quick connections

Feb. 26, 1999

Education dollars for employees

If you think career development isn't important to BCBSF, take a look at the new Educational Investment Program, which rolls out March 1.

With the Educational Investment Program—or EIP—managers will help their employees prepare career development plans, aligning both individual and corporate objectives. If you're an active employee (for six months or more) and want to take one college course or pursue a degree that supports our business needs and purpose, BCBSF will invest in your education. (Reimbursement is based on state tuition rates, according to the grade you receive: 100 percent for an A or B; 80 percent for a C.)

The key to opening up the program for you is the individual development plan. Your manager should have the information you need. All required forms and the new policy are posted in the Microsoft Exchange Public Information Folder. Go to the Human Resources folder under Information Central.

Employees approved, attending and on file by Feb. 22 under the old Tuition Reimbursement Plan can complete their degree program under that plan.



HIPAA-AS information on Intranet

Remember the comprehensive Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) that took effect July 1, 1997? (See Profile, Aug. 29, 1997.)

A complex piece of legislation, with sweeping implications for both employees and health care plans, HIPAA was intended to improve portability and continuity of health insurance coverage for groups and individuals. But it also had other provisions.

Last year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services began implementing a provision that substantially affects all health care organizations that electronically transmit or accept claims and related transactions—a provision related to administrative simplification (“AS”) that mandates the use of standard electronic formats; national identifiers for providers, employers, plans and individuals; and security standards.

HIPAA-AS compliance touches over 2,000 different variables and will have up to 10 times the impact of the Y2K problem, some analysts say! Everything will be affected, from computer systems and business processes through individual forms and documents, plus security and privacy practices and protocols. But the health care industry estimates that full implementation of the HIPAA-AS provisions could save up to \$9 billion per year from administrative overhead, without reducing the amount or quality of health care services.

A HIPAA-AS Feasibility Team has been addressing the implications of administrative simplification on BCBSF and its corporate

strategies and is developing alternatives and recommendations for corporate compliance.

To learn more, check out the team’s informational Web page on BCBSF’s Intranet—and check back periodically for updates.

If you have questions, concerns or would like to have a HIPAA-AS presentation given to your department, contact a team member via the Web site.

Are you using email properly?

Electronic Commerce is gearing up to provide employees with the capability to communicate externally by email. With that on the horizon, now’s a good time to look at the corporate policy that sets the guidelines for email use. This is the first in a series on that subject.

All employees must abide by Corp. Policy #5.2, which limits email use to business purposes only. The policy also states that email messages are the property of BCBSF, may be monitored by the company and are not considered private.

Using email for personal business is not appropriate and is cause for disciplinary action. In our next issue, we’ll cover inappropriate uses of email and the risks associated with them.

If you have questions about email use, call Joe Gilfus, Corporate Data security officer, at 904-791-6554. Or send him an email!



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Share the words of wisdom that inspire you

Is there a special quotation by someone famous (or infamous!) that inspires you to great things? Then why not share those words with fellow employees?

Email your inspirational quotations, along with your title, department, and phone number, to Blue Views. Submissions will be considered for publication in future issues of Quick Connections. Publication is at the sole discretion of the editor.

Look to today. Procrastination is the art of keeping up with yesterday.

—Anonymous

—submitted by Lisa York, Public Relations



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Care Manager product improvements under way

BCBSF Care Manager growth in 1998 was phenomenal. Product improvements under way are designed to make Care Manager products the premier point-of-service plans in Florida. Here's what's new:

- *For BCBSF and PPC Care Manager products, no PCP referral is needed for Emergency Room benefits to be paid at the higher benefit level. All follow-up care still needs a PCP referral, however, to receive the higher benefit.*
- *BCBSF and PPC Care Manager ID cards were redesigned to be more user friendly and reduce provider confusion. Distribution begins in March.*
- *For South Florida, a new BCBSF Care Manager directory includes important product information in its introduction. A Point-of-Service Companion Card on the back cover explains member and provider responsibilities for care not coordinated through the PCP.*
- *Operational changes will expedite claims payments and assist Customer Service in responding to customers' needs.*

Care Manager product information now online

The BCBSF Care Manager plan, a point-of-service product, offers distinct advantages both to customers and our organization. It also can be confusing to use and administer if not fully understood.

Now, for accurate information turn to the BCBSF Care Manager Information Folder on the K: drive. The folder provides a comprehensive library of information for employees in Operations and Sales and Marketing, as well as for customers, agents and brokers.

In addition to product information guides and provider education pieces, you'll find member education materials, as well as provider data. The BCBSF Care Manager South Florida provider listing is currently online; listings for other GBUs will be included in the future.

To access the file through Microsoft Word:

- *Click on open;*
- *Under "My Computer," click on the public K: drive*
- *Click on BCBSF Care Manager Information folder.*

Please Note: All updates or additions to the BCBSF Care Manager Information Folder should be reviewed by the Care Manager Communication work team. Contact Amy Larkin, file administrator, at 1-800-477-3736, ext. 55342, prior to April 1, 1999; or Kevin Fergusson at ext. 54191 after April 1, 1999, for more information.

Got news?

Quick Connections is published biweekly to provide you with timely information that supports the corporation's seven objectives that focus on: customer satisfaction, market leadership, financial strength, public understanding, organizational effectiveness, delivery systems and the national association.

If you have newsworthy information that can be tied to these seven corporate objectives, please let us know. You can email us at Blue Views. Or call Laura Jo Brunson at 904-905-3402.

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